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# Balls of fire in the sky

## International UFO study group probes night sightings in Haverhill

By JIM LENANE
Gazette staff writer

The several unidentified flying object (UFO) reports made to the Haverhill Gazette in the past two weeks are being investigated by an international UFO study organization.

The Mutual UFO Network, which has its headquarters in Seguin, Texas, has said it will probe the half dozen reports the Gazette has received from area residents.

Walt Andrews, international director of the network, said yesterday he would notify Marge Christensen of Beverly, a national director and director of public relations for the group, which Andrews said has members all over the world.

Christensen said the reports, all involving large bright objects in the night sky shooting "balls of fire" downward, displayed "an interesting consistency" and she would look into them.

Some of the witnesses say they saw the vivid object late Sunday night near Kenoza Lake. Some witnesses insist it couldn't have been meteors or planets, despite the speculation of an astronomer contacted earlier this week by the Gazette.

Christensen, a Beverly public school teacher, said,"Reports of phenomena in the sky have been coming in rapidly in recent weeks," but she had not heard of any from the Haverhill area until called by the Gazette.

The latest report came from Joseph St. Jean of 118 Primrose St., who said he, his son, James St. Jean, and a neighbor, Russell Arsenault, watched a bright object. He described it as "quite bright and way up in the sky; not near the ground, in the west."

The elder St. Jean said,"We watched for a few minutes and it shot balls of fire downward and then it just shot away from us, toward the west."

Christensen said she wants to get the names of others who have seen unidentifiable objects in the sky. She said she will redistribute the Mutual UFO Network's card with a hotline number to area police departments.

She asked that anyone with such a sighting call the hotline at 1-944-0680 to report it.

Andrews said the number of reports from a specific part of the country can change rapidly from time to time. He said reports from Massachusetts had fallen off drastically in recent years,"but at one time, it was quite an active area in regard to sightings. The trend may be reversing. We will investigate."

Andrews said the Haverhill reports come at an opportune time, since the organization is having its national convention in the Beverly Community Center Aug. 12. Andrews and Christensen said internationally known experts on UFOs will speak at the gathering.

CR: B. Greenwood